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ABSTRACT

A study conducted to assess the needs for inservice experiences as perceived by learning resources specialists employed in Texas public schools asked a random sample of 313 practitioners to rate a comprehensive list of competencies in educational technology and library science as being of value in the performance of their jobs, and to evaluate their own level of development or expertise for each competency. Data from the 224 responses received provide credence for seven broad conclusions: continuing education is generally needed for this group; all 60 competencies were rated at least of "some importance"; the general level of expertise was rated at least near the level of "some capability"; respondents indicated a low level of expertise in 13 competencies they rated as important; two additional groups of competencies were identified for second priority in continuing education needs; respondents placed greater value on competencies associated with organization, management, acquisition, and dissemination; and they rated their expertise at a lower level for competencies in areas they rated as less important. Suggestions are made for future research, and a 10-item bibliography is provided. The survey materials appended include a copy of the questionnaire. (CHC)

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IDENTIFYING CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS AS PERCEIVED BY PUBLIC SCHOOL LEARNING RESOURCES PERSONNEL IN TEXAS

A Final Report of a Research Project

by

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IR009669

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February 1981

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	v
Chapter	1
I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	1
Evolution of the Learning Resources Center Concept	1
Legislative Implementation in Texas	2
Need for Continuing Education	2
II. METHODOLOGY	4
Data Gathering Instrument	4
Selection of Sample	5
Dissemination of Research Questionnaire	5
III. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA	7
Rate of Response	7
Descriptive Data on Respondents	7
Comparisions of Mean Value and Mean Expertise for 60 Competencies	9
Ranking of Competencies By Value	15
Function Analysis of Competencies By Value	21
Ranking of Competencies by Expertise	21
Function Analysis of Competencies By Expertise	28
Identification of Competencies Pertinent For Continuing Education Programs	30

Page

IV. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS 34

Summary 34

Conclusions 34

Recommendations 37

BIBLIOGRAPHY 39

APPENDICES

A. PANEL OF CONSULTANTS 40

B. QUESTIONNAIRE 41

C. COVER LETTER FOR QUESTIONNAIRE 49

D. FOLLOW-UP LETTER 50

E. ENDORSEMENT LETTER - TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY 51

F. LETTER TO LEARNING RESOURCES PROGRAM DIRECTORS 52

G. ENDORSEMENT LETTER - PRESIDENT, LEARNING RESOURCES PROGRAM DIRECTORS 54

H. ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES SUGGESTED BY RESPONDENTS 55

I. COMMENTS

Comments Associated With Function I: Organization and Management 58

Comments Associated With Function II: Acquisition and Dissemination 60

Comments Associated With Function III: Consultation, Instruction, Utilization 61

Comments Associated With Function IV: Learning Resources Development 62

General Comments 64

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Finally, recognition should be given to the Learning Resources Personnel in Texas public schools who devoted time in their busy schedules to complete the survey instrument. Their response, as well as their many comments and letters of concern, are indicative of a high level of professional dedication.

TABLES

Table		Page
1.	Certification Held by 224 Respondents	8
2.	Level of Employment for 224 Respondents	8
3.	Size of School District for 224 Respondents	9
4.	Average Years of Experience for 224 Respondents	9
5.	Analysis of Variance Comparisions for Value and Expertise for 60 Competencies	10
6.	60 Competencies Ranked in Descending Order By Mean Score for Value	16
7.	Frequency Distribution of Mean Value Scores	20
8.	Function Analysis for 60 Competencies Ranked in Descending Order By Mean Value	21
9.	60 Competencies Ranked in Ascending Order By Mean Scores For Expertise	22
10.	Frequency Distribution for Mean Expertise Scores	28
11.	Function Analysis for 60 Competencies Ranked in Ascending Order By Mean Expertise	29
12.	Value/Expertise Matrix	31

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

EVOLUTION OF THE LEARNING RESOURCES CENTER CONCEPT

The role of the school librarians has experienced vast change since libraries first came into existence in public schools around the turn of the century. School librarians were first considered primarily clerks, then later professional librarians earned equal status with teachers. As pedagogical practices changed, the responsibility of the school librarian became more sophisticated and complex. Some school libraries evolved into information centers that were closely related to the school's objectives, furnishing nonbook material as well as print resources that supported every aspect of the curriculum. Financial aid from Federal sources in the 1960's provided impetus for the final stage of evolution toward the learning resources center concept. As educators pursued new strategies of instruction and experiemented with alternative organizational patterns, there was widespread adoption of unified media programs giving students and teachers access to all types of hardware and software resources and administered through the school library media center. The role of the director of the media center was elevated to the level of a professional manager, possessing a blend of the competencies of a teacher as well as an information specialist. The significance of this broad role was specified in a joint publication of the American Association of School Librarians and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology, Media Programs; District and School. In this statement, the media professional was charged with the responsibility to provide services "designed to assist learners to grow in their ability to find, generate, evaluate, and apply information that helps them to function

effectively as individuals and to participate fully in society." (American Association of School Librarians, 1975: 4)

LEGISLATIVE IMPLEMENTATION IN TEXAS

In Texas, the emerging role of learning resources center personnel came to fruition in May 1976 when the State Board of Education adopted the Professional Certificate and Endorsement Program for the Learning Resources Specialist. The School Librarian Certificate, which it replaced, ceased to be issued on August 31, 1979. Persons earning the new certificate were perceived to be "hybrid" professionals. Their qualifications and training would enable them to assume a broader role in managing learning resources programs congruent with the modern concept of integrated access to information and utilization of resources regardless of format. The new requirements mandated that personnel possess competencies in both educational technology and library science (Herring, 1978: 3).

NEED FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

The passage of time will assure that, at some future date, all Learning Resources Specialists will possess fully the broadly based requirements called for in the new certification program. At the present time, however, most practitioners in the field were trained to function in a more limited capacity as school librarians. Presumably, they may lack expertise in the area of educational technology; however, no research has been conducted to ascertain their specific need for continuing education. The present study seeks to assess the needs for inservice experiences as preceived by practitioners currently employed

in Texas public schools. Specifically, two questions are addressed:

(1) How do practitioners rate a comprehensive list of competencies in educational technology and library science as being of value in the performance of their jobs?

(2) How do practitioners evaluate their level of development or expertise for each competency?

The rationale for analyzing these needs as perceived by practitioners for both value and level of expertise is supported by the literature related to inservice training effectiveness:

> "Needs for action that are recognized by teachers as well as by media personnel are the only fruitful points of departure for inservice education programs. When needs have been identified by teachers themselves in one way or another, the task of developing interest, of announcing, initiating, and organizing learning situations is made easy." (Erickson, 1968: 122)

The findings of this research may be useful as a planning tool for administrators and leaders responsible for professional development in school districts, professional organizations, education agencies, and institutions of higher education. Both emerging and established preparation programs in colleges and universities may benefit from practitioners' input for program planning and improvement.

II. METHODOLOGY

The central purpose of this inquiry was to gather data from Texas Learning Resources Specialists regarding their perceived needs for continuing education. To secure these group judgements, a questionnaire was designed and disseminated to a random sample of practitioners in the field.

DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENT

The research questionnaire was developed from a comprehensive list of competencies published by the Texas Education Agency to complement the Professional Certificate and Endorsement Program for the Learning Resources Specialist, adopted May 8, 1976 (TEA, Instructional Resources Division, 1976). Sixty competency statements were generated on the basis of this publication to describe the functional abilities which Learning Resources Specialists must exercise in the conduct of job-related activities. The statements were presented on the questionnaire according to four major functions identified by the State certification study committee: (I) Organization and Management, (II) Acquisition and Dissemination, (III) Consultation, Instruction, Utilization, and (IV) Learning Resources Development. Each competency was accompanied by two separate five-point Likert scales. In one column respondents were asked to rate each competency in terms of its importance to effective job performance. In another column, they were asked to evaluate their level of development or expertise for the competency. On the final page of the data collecting instrument, descriptive information related to certification, employment level, size of school district, experience, and educational background was requested.

To assess the clarity, readability, and accuracy of the questionnaire, it was submitted to a committee for four consultants whose names appear in Appendix A. Slight revisions recommended by the panel were made, and the resulting survey instrument is reproduced in Appendix B.

SELECTION OF SAMPLE

The sample of participants was selected from a computerized list of Learning Resources Specialists in Texas during 1978-79 which was made available to the researcher at the Instructional Resource Division, Texas Education Agency, in Austin. Approximately 3130 names appeared on the roster, listed in alphabetical order by school district. A ten percent sample was randomly selected from this population. To accomplish this procedure, a number was drawn by chance between one and ten to determine a beginning point on the list. With this first name identified, each successive tenth name was selected and recorded with the name of the school district. The resulting sample yielded names of 313 practitioners. Additional information for more complete addresses was located later in the Texas School Directory (TEA, 1979).

DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

The initial mailing of the questionnaire, with a cover letter (Appendix C) and a return envelope was accomplished April 18, 1980. After three weeks had elapsed, a second mailing was carried out for persons who had not responded. A second survey form with another return envelope was mailed, along with a second cover letter from the researcher (Appendix D) as well as a letter of endorsement from Mary R. Boyvey, Media Program Director, Instructional Resources Division,

Texas Education Agency (Appendix E).

An attempt was also made to elicit administrative support for the project from the Learning Resources Program Directors in the state. A letter (Appendix F) was mailed to them and was accompanied by a list of names identifying persons in their school districts who had received survey instruments. Also enclosed was a letter in support of the project from Kathryn Thompson, President, The Learning Resources Program Directors of Texas (Appendix G).

The final procedural step in the research was a follow-up phone call. Those who had not returned the survey form by May 25, 1980 were contacted by telephone. Upon completion of this final stage in the survey procedure, a total of 224 questionnaires were received, representing a response rate of 72 percent. The resulting data was tabulated and analyzed.

III. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The two types of data generated by this study are reported and analyzed in this section. The descriptive data which provide a profile of characteristics from the respondents were calculated by hand. Analysis of all other data was accomplished through the Data Processing Center at Texas A&M University.

RATE OF RESPONSE

Two hundred twenty-four persons responded by completing the questionnaire. This was a 72 percent return rate. Cooperation and support of the study by the Texas Education Agency and The Learning Resources Program Directors of Texas are reflected in this rate.

DESCRIPTIVE DATA ON RESPONDENTS

The responses provided on the final page of the questionnaire were compiled as background information on the participants. The results are characterized by type of certification, level of employment, size of school district, and experience.

Table 1 indicates that 172 of the 224 respondents held a School Librarian Certificate, while 30 held the Learning Resources Specialist Certificate. The fact that several respondents held more than one certificate accounts for the total of more than 224.

TABLE 1

Certification Held by 224 Respondents

School Librarian	172
Learning Resources Specialist	30
Both Learning Resources Specialist and School Librarian	12
Other Certificates	33
Total	247

Level of school employment is illustrated in Table 2. Since some respondents indicated that they served several schools at different levels, the total is greater than the total number of respondents.

TABLE 2

Level of Employment for 224 Respondents

Elementary	95
Middle School and Junior High	70
Senior High	76
Total	241

Table 3 illustrates size of the school districts where participants are employed. Although the survey form provided categories for five sizes according to average daily attendance, the information compiled was collapsed into three classifications. Missing data for persons who failed to complete this portion of the survey accounts for the fact that the total is less than the total number of respondents.

TABLE 3

Size of School Districts for 224 Respondents

Small (under 5,999 ADA)	80
Medium (5,000 - 49,999 ADA)	97
Large (over 50,000 ADA)	30
Total	207

Years of experience as a librarian or learning resources specialist, and classroom teacher are reported in Table 4. Respondents as a whole were well practiced, with an average of approximately ten years reported for each position.

TABLE 4

Average Years of Experience for 224 Respondents

	Average Years	Number of Respondents
Librarian and/or Learning Resources Specialist	10.6	208
Classroom Teacher	9.9	167

COMPARISONS OF MEAN VALUE AND MEAN EXPERTISE FOR 60 COMPETENCIES

Mean scores for value exceeded the means for expertise, without exception, for all sixty competencies. Analysis of variance was used to determine the significance of the difference between the two scores for each competency, with all tests applied at the .05 confidence level. As illustrated in Table 5, while mean value was significantly higher than mean expertise for fifty-eight of the sixty competencies the probability exceeded .05 for only two of the sixty. The resulting conclusion was that statistically significant differences do not exist between mean

TABLE 5

Analysis of Variance Comparisons for Value and Expertise for 60 Competencies

Competency	Mean Value	Mean Expertise	Probability
1. Formulate objectives, plans, and policies for the program of the Learning Resources Center.	4.4988	3.8744	0.0000
2. Implement objectives, plans, and policies for the program of the Learning Resources Center.	4.5068	3.9728	0.0000
3. Evaluate programs and services.	4.2569	3.8257	0.0000
4. Apply systems approach to implementing services.	3.3744	3.0359	0.0000
5. Supervise personnel and provide for staff development.	4.0240	3.6683	0.0000
6. Develop and apply budgetary procedures.	4.2488	3.9032	0.0000
7. Establish record keeping systems and prepare reports.	4.3153	4.1306	0.0008
8. Develop policies and procedures for circulation and scheduling of materials.	4.6216	4.3288	0.0000
9. Develop policies and procedures for circulation and scheduling of equipment.	4.4009	4.1060	0.0000
10. Develop policies and procedures for maintenance of materials.	4.3484	3.9819	0.0000
11. Develop policies and procedures for maintenance of equipment.	4.0798	3.6526	0.0000
12. Implement policies and procedures for circulation of materials.	4.6109	4.3167	0.0000
13. Implement policies and procedures for circulation of equipment.	4.3287	4.0463	0.0001

TABLE 5 (continued)

Competency	Mean Value	Mean Expertise	Probability
14. Evaluate and select resources which will meet informational, research, educational, and recreational needs of users.	4.7285	4.2262	0.0000
15. Consult with teachers on evaluation and selection processes for acquiring materials.	4.5000	4.1789	0.0000
16. Consult with teachers on evaluation and selection processes for acquiring equipment.	3.9057	3.7925	0.0925
17. Design plans for new or remodeled facilities.	3.6540	3.2844	0.0001
18. Plan facilities and prepare specifications to provide for optimum access to materials and equipment.	3.9112	3.3925	0.0000
19. Plan facilities for local design and production services.	3.1952	2.8952	0.0006
20. Use research methodology in solving educational and administrative problems.	3.1321	2.8821	0.0008
21. Identify problem areas for study, formulate plans, and conduct research projects.	3.2269	2.9907	0.0021
22. Prepare proposals for funding from various sources.	3.1990	2.7[illegible]	0.0000
23. Design information systems and apply principles of information system design to Learning Resources Centers.	3.2315	2.6601	0.0000
24. Plan, design, and implement storage and retrieval systems for materials.	3.8326	3.3116	0.0000

TABLE 5 (continued)

Competency	Mean Value	Mean Expertise	Probability
25. Plan, design, and implement storage and retrieval systems for equipment.	3.6872	3.2322	0.0000
26. Develop and execute policies and procedures for acquisition of materials.	4.1927	3.9587	0.0007
27. Develop and execute policies and procedures for acquisition of equipment.	3.8796	3.6250	0.0008
28. Apply evaluation criteria to materials.	4.1982	3.8829	0.0000
29. Apply technical specifications to equipment.	3.2402	2.7402	0.0000
30. Identify sources for purchasing materials.	4.1689	3.9635	0.0006
31. Identify sources for purchasing equipment.	3.8389	3.6398	0.0065
32. Screen and disseminate information to teachers on new developments and practices.	4.1050	3.7123	0.0000
33. Disseminate information to students and teachers on the availability of materials and equipment in the Learning Resources Center and their effective use.	4.5459	4.1697	0.0000
34. Disseminate information to students and teachers on resource production techniques.	3.5481	3.2548	0.0006
35. Provide access to materials through organization and classification which integrates materials in all formats into a unified collection.	4.2731	4.0463	0.0002

TABLE 5 (continued)

Competency	Mean Value	Mean Expertise	Probability
36. Provide reference services and materials.	4.6438	4.3836	0.0000
37. Provide bibliographic services.	3.9861	3.9815	1.0000
38. Develop policies and procedures for preview, evaluation, and selection of materials.	4.0939	3.8967	0.0023
39. Develop policies and procedures for evaluation and selection of equipment.	3.7464	3.4976	0.0011
40. Implement policies and procedures for previewing, evaluation, and selection.	4.0048	3.7810	0.0008
41. Facilitate access to and delivery of materials from community, district, or regional sources.	3.7157	3.5000	0.0034
42. Conduct a public relations program.	3.6837	3.2977	0.0000
43. Name and explain various styles of learning which account for individual differences among students.	3.3750	3.1852	0.0059
44. Use information, communication, and learning theories and models in relation to learning styles and individual differences among students.	3.4883	3.2066	0.0000
45. Identify ways of meeting student needs and develop methods for helping students clarify values.	3.8972	3.5374	0.0000
46. Develop techniques for working with counselors, teachers, administrators, and parents in order to assess and improve student learning.	3.8744	3.4186	0.0000

TABLE 5 (continued)

Competency	Mean Value	Mean Expertise	Probability
47. Identify and communicate research findings relevant to assessing student abilities and achievement.	3.1963	3.0327	0.0236
48. Analyze thinking operations and explore characteristics of creativity.	3.2093	2.9767	0.0005
49. Identify capabilities of various communication media; indicate appropriate usage in the learning environment.	3.7767	3.4000	0.0000
50. Assist and guide teachers and students in the design and development of instructional programs including validation in relation to learner needs, teacher strategies, and learning environments.	3.5833	3.2546	0.0000
51. Facilitate viewing, listening, and responding skills of students and teachers.	3.8341	3.6037	0.0002
52. Foster independent and critical use of the Learning Resources Center by providing teachers and students with instruction in location skills, use of information/bibliographic sources, production techniques, and use of equipment.	4.4636	4.0273	0.0000
53. Design and implement inservice education programs for teachers, aides, and other school related groups.	3.8433	3.5069	0.0000
54. Identify problem areas and conduct research to bring about solutions.	3.5238	3.2476	0.0000
55. Apply learning theories to the design and production of materials.	3.4087	3.0962	0.0001

TABLE 5 (continued)

Competency	Mean Value	Mean Expertise	Probability
56. Design and produce materials to meet student and teacher needs.	3.6179	3.2736	0.0001
57. Analyze, interpret, and apply research data to the design of materials.	3.1875	2.8558	0.0001
58. Apply design principles to the production of materials.	3.2390	2.8488	0.0000
59. Analyze and interpret content of materials in relation to the curriculum.	4.0853	3.7583	0.0000
60. Validate locally produced materials by applying appropriate criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of materials.	3.5631	3.3204	0.0012

value and mean expertise scores for these two competencies. Practitioners regard their level of proficiency as equal to the importance they place on their skill for effective job performance for:

#16 - Consult with teachers on evaluation and selection processes for acquiring equipment. (Function I)

#37 - Provide bibliographic services. (Function II)

Practitioners appear to value the remaining fifty-eight competencies more highly than they assess their current level of expertise.

RANKING OF COMPETENCIES BY VALUE

The mean score for value ranged from a low of 3.13 to a high of 4.73. Table 6 displays the ranking of competencies by means, in descending order, with the competency regarded highest in importance listed first, and the one designated least in importance listed last.

TABLE 6

60 Competencies Ranked in Descending Order by Mean Scores for Value

Rank	Mean Value	Competency	Function
1	4.73	14. Evaluate and select resources which will meet informational, research, educational, and recreational needs of users.	I
2	4.64	36. Provide reference services and materials.	II
3	4.62	8. Develop policies and procedures for circulation and scheduling of materials.	I
4	4.61	12. Implement policies and procedures for circulation of materials.	I
5	4.55	33. Disseminate information to students and teachers on the availablity of materials and equipment in the Learning Resources Center.	II
6	4.51	2. Implement objectives, plans and policies for the program of the Learning Resources Center.	I
7	4.50	15. Consult with teachers on evaluation and selection processes for acquiring materials.	I
8	4.49	1. Formulate objectives, plans, and policies for the program of the Learning Resources Center.	I
9	4.46	52. Foster independent and critical use of the Learning Resources Center by providing teachers and students with instruction in location skills, use of information/ bibliographic sources, production techniques, and use of equipment.	III III
10	4.40	9. Develop policies and procedures for circulation and scheduling of equipment.	I
11	4.35	10. Develop policies and procedures for maintenance of materials.	I
12	4.33	13. Implement policies and procedures for circulation of equipment.	I
13	4.32	7. Establish record keeping systems and prepare reports.	I

TABLE 6 (continued)

Rank	Mean Value	Competency	Function
14	4.27	35. Provide access to materials through organization and classification which integrates materials in all formats into a unified collection.	II
15	4.26	3. Evaluate programs and services.	I
16	4.25	6. Develop and apply budgetary procedures.	I
17	4.20	28. Apply evaluation criteria to materials.	II
18	4.19	26. Develop and execute policies and procedures for acquistion of materials.	II
19	4.17	30. Identify sources for purchasing materials.	II
20	4.11	32. Screen and disseminate information to teachers on new developments and practices.	II
21	4.09	38. Develop policies and procedures for preview, evaluation, and selection of materials.	II
22	4.09	59. Analyze and interpret content of materials in relation to the curriculum.	IV
23	4.08	11. Develop policies and procedures for maintenance of equipment.	I
24	4.02	5. Supervise personnel and provide for staff development.	I
25	4.01	40. Implement policies and procedures for previewing, evaluation, and selection.	II
26	3.99	37. Provide bibliographic services.	II
27	3.91	18. Plan facilities and prepare specifications to provide for optimum access to materials and equipment.	I
28	3.91	16. Consult with teachers on evaluation and selection processes for acquiring equipment.	I
29	3.90	45. Identify ways of meeting student needs and develop methods of helping students clarify values.	III

TABLE 6 (continued)

Rank	Mean Value	Competency	Function
30	3.88	27. Develop and execute policies and procedures for acquisition of equipment.	II
31	3.87	46. Develop techniques for working with counselors, teachers, administrators, and parents in order to assess and improve student learning.	III
32	3.84	53. Design and implement inservice education programs for teachers, aides, and other school related groups.	III
33	3.84	31. Identify sources for purchasing equipment.	II
34	3.83	51. Facilitate viewing, listening, and responding skills of students and teachers.	III
35	3.83	24. Plan, design, and implement storage and retrieval systems for materials.	II
36	3.78	49. Identify capabilities of various communication media; indicate appropriate usage in the learning environment.	III
37	3.75	39. Develop policies and procedures for evaluation and selection of equipment.	II
38	3.72	41. Facilitate access to and delivery of materials from community, district, or regional sources.	II
39	3.69	25. Plan, design, and implement storage and retrieval systems for equipment.	II
40	3.68	42. Conduct a public relations program.	II
41	3.65	17. Design plans for new or remodeled facilities.	I
42	3.62	54. Identify problem areas and conduct research to bring about solutions.	III
43	3.62	56. Design and produce materials to meet student and teacher needs.	IV

TABLE 6 (continued)

Rank	Mean Value	Competency	Function
44	3.58	50. Assist and guide teachers and students in the design and development of instructional programs including validation in relation to learner needs, teacher strategies, and learning environments.	III
45	3.56	60. Validate locally produced materials by applying appropriate criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of materials.	IV
46	3.55	34. Disseminate information to students and teachers on resource production techniques.	II
47	3.49	44. Use information, communication, and learning theories and models in relation to learning styles and individual differences among students.	III
48	3.41	55. Apply learning theories to the design and production of materials.	IV
49	3.38	43. Name and explain various styles of learning which account for individual differences among students.	III
50	3.37	4. Apply systems approach to implementing services.	I
51	3.24	29. Apply technical specifications to equipment.	II
52	3.24	58. Apply design principles to the production of materials.	IV
53	3.23	23. Design information systems and apply principles of information system design to Learning Resources Centers.	II
54.	3.23	21. Identify problem areas for study, formulate plans, and conduct research projects.	I
55	3.21	48. Analyze thinking operations and explore characteristics of creativity.	III
56	3.20	22. Prepare proposals for funding from various sources.	I

TABLE 6 (continued)

Rank	Mean Value	Competency	Function
57	3.20	47. Identify and communicate research findings relevant to assessing student abilities and achievement.	III
58	3.20	19. Plan facilities for local design and production services.	I
59	3.19	57. Analyze, interpret and apply research data to design of materials.	IV
50	3.13	20. Use research methodology in solving educational and administrative problems.	I

A frequency distribution was constructed from mean value scores and is shown in Table 7. The value scores clustered toward the fourth point on the five-point scale, labeled as "important"; thirty-nine

TABLE 7

Frequency Distribution of Mean Value Scores

Number of Competencies	Mean Value
7	4.5 - 5.0
18	4.0 - 4.5
21	3.5 - 4.0
14	3.0 - 3.5
0	Below 3.0

competencies fell between the range of 3.5 and 4.5. The seven competencies which fell between 4.5 and 5.0 were identified as "very important," and considered to have closest relationship to job performance.

FUNCTION ANALYSIS OF COMPETENCIES BY VALUE

Table 8 displays a function analysis of the ranking of competencies in descending order by mean value scores. A relatively large portion of the competency statements in Function I (Organization and Management) and Function II (Acquisition and Dissemination) fell within the top thirds of the range, while a relatively large percent of the competency statements in Function III (Consultation, Instruction, Utilization) and Function IV (Learning Resources Development) fell within the bottom third.

TABLE 8

Function Analysis for 60 Competencies Ranked in Descending Order By Mean Value

	I	II	III	IV
Top Third (Ranked 1 through 20)	$\frac{12}{22}$ = 55%	$\frac{7}{20}$ = 35%	$\frac{1}{12}$ = 8%	0
Middle Third (Ranked 21 through 40)	$\frac{4}{22}$ = 18%	$\frac{10}{20}$ = 50%	$\frac{5}{12}$ = 42%	$\frac{1}{6}$ = 17%
Bottom Third (Ranked 41 through 60)	$\frac{6}{22}$ = 27%	$\frac{3}{20}$ = 15%	$\frac{6}{12}$ = 50%	$\frac{5}{6}$ = 83%
Total Per Function	22 = 100%	20 = 100%	12 = 100%	6 = 100%

RANKING OF COMPETENCIES BY EXPERTISE

The mean scores for expertise ranged from a low of 2.66 to a high of 4.73. Table 9 displays the competencies ranked in ascending order.

Table 9

60 Competencies Ranked in Ascending Order by Mean Scores For Expertise

Rank	Mean Expertise	Competency	Function
1	2.66	23. Design information systems and apply principles of information system design to Learning Resources Centers.	II
2	2.71	22. Prepare proposals for funding from various sources.	I
3	2.74	29. Apply technical specifications to equipment.	II
4	2.85	58. Apply design principles to the production of materials	IV
5	2.86	57. Analyze, interpret, and apply research data to design of materials.	IV
6	2.88	20. Use research methodology in solving educational and administrative problems.	I
7	2.90	19. Plan facilities for local design and production services.	I
8	2.98	48. Analyze thinking operations and explore characteristics of creativity.	III
9	2.99	21. Identify problem areas for study, formulate plans, and conduct research projects.	I
10	3.03	47. Identify and communicate research findings relevant to assessing student abilities and achievement.	III
11	3.04	4. Apply systems approach to implementing services.	I

TABLE 9 (continued)

Rank	Mean Expertise	Competency	Function
12	3.10	55. Apply learning theories to the design and production of materials.	IV
13	3.19	43. Name and explain various styles of learning which account for individual differences among students.	III
14	3.21	44. Use information, communication, and learning theories and models in relation to learning styles and individual differences among students.	III
15	3.23	25. Plan, design, and implement storage and retrieval systems for equipment.	II
16	3.25	54. Identify problem areas and conduct research to bring about solutions.	III
17	3.25	50. Assist and guide teachers and students in the design and development of instructional programs including validation in relation to learner needs, teacher strategies, and learning environments.	III
18	3.25	34. Disseminate information to students and teachers on resource production techniques.	II
19	3.27	56. Design and produce materials to meet student and teacher needs.	IV
20	3.28	17. Design plans for new or remodeled facilities.	I
21	3.30	42. Conduct a public relations program.	II
22	3.31	24. Plan, design, and implement storage and retrieval systems for materials.	II

TABLE 9 (continued)

Rank	Mean Expertise	Competency	Function
23	3.32	60. Validate locally produced materials by applying appropriate criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of materials.	IV
24	3.39	18. Plan facilities and prepare specifications to provide for optimum access to materials and equipment.	I
25	3.40	49. Identify capabilities of various communication media; indicate appropriate usage in the learning environment.	III
26	3.42	46. Develop techniques for working with counselors, teachers, administrators, and parents in order to assess and improve student learning.	III
27	3.50	39. Develop policies and procedures for evaluation and selection of equipment.	II
28	3.50	41. Facilitate access to and delivery of materials from community, district, or regional sources.	II
29	3.51	53. Design and implement in-service education programs for teachers, aides, and other school related groups.	III
30	3.54	45. Identify ways of meeting student needs and develop methods for helping students clarify values.	III
31	3.60	51. Facilitate viewing, listening, and responding skills of students and teachers.	III
32	3.63	27. Develop and execute policies and procedures for acquisition of equipment.	II

TABLE 9 (continued)

Rank	Mean Expertise	Competency	Function
33	3.64	31. Identify sources for purchasing equipment.	II
34	3.65	11. Develop policies and procedures for maintenance of equipment.	I
35	3.67	5. Supervise personnel and provide for staff development.	I
36	3.71	32. Screen and disseminate information to teachers on new developments and practices.	II
37	3.76	59. Analyze and interpret content of materials in relation to the curriculum.	IV
38	3.78	40. Implement policies and procedures for previewing, evaluation, and selection.	II
39	3.79	16. Consult with teachers on evaluation and selection processes for acquiring equipment.	I
40	3.83	3. Evaluate programs and services.	I
41	3.87	1. Formulate objectives, plans, and policies for the program of the Learning Resources Center.	I
42	3.88	28. Apply evaluation criteria to materials.	II
43	3.90	38. Develop policies and procedures for preview, evaluation, and selection of materials.	II
44	3.90	6. Develop and apply budgetary procedures.	I
45	3.96	26. Develop and execute policies and procedures for acquisition of materials.	II

TABLE 9 (continued)

Rank	Mean Expertise	Competency	Function
46	3.96	30. Identify sources for purchasing materials.	II
47	3.97	2. Implement objectives, plans and policies for the program of the Learning Resources Center.	I
48	3.98	37. Provide bibliographic services.	II
49	3.98	10. Develop policies and procedures for maintenance of materials.	I
50	4.03	52. Foster independent and critical use of the Learning Resources Center by providing teachers and students with instruction in location skills, use of information/bibliographic sources, production techniques, and use of equipment.	III
51	4.05	35. Provide access to materials through organization and classification which integrates materials in all formats into a unified collection.	II
52	4.05	13. Implement policies and procedures for circulation of equipment.	I
53	4.11	9. Develop policies and procedures for circulation and scheduling of equipment.	I
54	4.13	7. Establish record keeping systems and prepare reports.	I
55	4.17	33. Disseminate information to students and teachers on the availability of materials and equipment in the Learning Resources Center and their effective use.	II

TABLE 9 (continued)

Rank	Mean Expertise	Competency	Function
56	4.18	15. Consult with teachers on evaluation and selection processes for acquiring materials.	I
57	4.23	14. Evaluate and select resources which will meet informational, research, educational and recreational needs of users.	I
58	4.32	12. Implement policies and procedures for circulation of materials.	I
59	4.33	8. Develop policies and procedures for circulation and scheduling of materials.	I
60	4.38	36. Provide reference services and materials.	II

The first entry in the table, representing the lowest mean score, was judged to be the most important for continuing education needs.

A frequency distribution for mean expertise scores is illustrated in Table 10. The largest percentage of the competencies fell within the range of the third and fourth points on the scale. Forty of the competencies cluster between 3.0, labeled as "some capability", and 4.0, defined as "well developed capability."

TABLE 10

Frequency Distribution of Mean Expertise Scores

Number of Competencies	Mean Expertise
0	Above 4.5
11	4.0 - 4.5
23	3.5 - 4.0
17	3.0 - 3.5
9	2.5 - 3.0
0	Below 2.5

FUNCTION ANALYSIS OF COMPETENCIES BY EXPERTISE

Table 11 displays a function analysis of the ranking of competencies in ascending order by mean scores for expertise. A relatively large percent of the competency statements in Function III (Consultation, Instruction, Utilization) and Function IV (Learning Resources Development) fell within the top third of the range, while a relatively large percent of the competency statements in Function I (Organization and Management) and Function II (Acquisition and Dissemination) fell within the bottom third.

TABLE 11

Function Analysis for 60 Competencies

Ranked In Ascending Order By

Mean Expertise

	I	II	III	IV
Top Third (Ranks 1 through 20)	$\frac{6}{22}$ = 27%	$\frac{4}{20}$ = 20%	$\frac{6}{12}$ = 50%	$\frac{4}{6}$ = 67%
Middle Third (Ranks 21 through 40)	$\frac{5}{22}$ = 23%	$\frac{8}{20}$ = 40%	$\frac{5}{12}$ = 42%	$\frac{2}{6}$ = 33%
Bottom Third (Ranks 41 through 60)	$\frac{11}{22}$ = 50%	$\frac{8}{20}$ = 40%	$\frac{1}{12}$ = 8%	0
Total Per Function	22 = 100%	20 = 100%	12 = 100%	6 = 100%

IDENTIFICATION OF COMPETENCIES PERTINENT FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

To isolate those competencies which exhibited a high mean value, while also having a low mean expertise score, a value/expertise matrix was constructed. This matrix is displayed in Table 12.

The group of competencies that appear in cell (4,3) and enclosed by the hatched lines are considered first in priority of importance for continuing education needs. This group includes the following thirteen competency statements:

FIRST PRIORITY GROUP - HIGH VALUE/LOW EXPERTISE

Function I

17. Design plans for new or remodeled facilities.
18. Plan facilities and prepare specifications to provide for optimum access to materials and equipment.

Function II

24. Plan, design, and implement storage and retrieval systems for materials.
25. Plan, design, and implement storage and retrieval systems for equipment.
34. Disseminate information to students and teachers on resource production techniques.
42. Conduct a public relations program.

Function III

44. Use information, communication, and learning theories and models in relation to learning styles and individual differences among students.

TABLE 12 Value/Expertise Matrix

EXPERTISE

VALUE	1	2	3	4	5
1					
2					
3			FN I: 4,19,20,21,22 FN II: 23,29 FN III: 43,47,48 FN IV: 55,57,58		
4			FN I: 17,18 FN II: 24,25,34,42 FN III: 44,46,49,50, 54 FN IV: 56,60	FN I: 3,5,6,7,9,10,11, 13,16 FN II: 26,27,28,30,31, 32,35,37,38,39,40,41 FN III: 45,51,53 FN IV: 59	
5				FN I: 1,2,8,12,14,15 FN II: 33,36 FN III: 52	

46. Develop techniques for working with counselors, teachers, administrators, and parents in order to assess and improve student learning.
49. Identify capabilities of various communication media; indicate appropriate usage in the learning environment.
50. Assist and guide teachers and students in the design and development of instructional programs including validation in relation to learner needs, teacher strategies, and learning environments.
54. Identify problem areas and conduct research to bring about solutions.

Function IV

56. Design and produce materials to meet student and teacher needs.
60 Validate locally produced materials by applying appropriate criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of materials.

Two other groups were identified as pertinent for second priority consideration in planning continuing education programs. The competency statements shown in cell (5,4) are considered to be the most important for job performance by practitioners, and for those in cell (3,3), they exhibit the lowest level of proficiency. The competency statements isolated in these two groups include the following:

SECOND PRIORITY GROUP - HIGH VALUE

Function I

1. Formulate objectives, plans, and policies for the program of the Learning Resources Center.
2. Implement objectives, plans, and policies for the program of the Learning Resources Center.
8. Develop policies and procedures for circulation and scheduling of materials.
12. Implement policies and procedures for circulation of materials.
14. Evaluate and select resources which will meet informational, research, educational, and recreational needs of users.
15. Consult with teachers on evaluation and selection processes for acquiring materials.

Function II

33. Disseminate information to students and teachers on the availability of materials and equipment in the Learning Resources Center and their effective use.
36. Provide reference services and materials.

Function III

52. Foster independent and critical use of the Learning Resources Center by providing teachers and students with instruction in location skills, use of information/bibliographic sources, production techniques, and use of equipment.

SECOND PRIORITY GROUP - LOW EXPERTISE

Function I

4. Apply systems approach to implementing services.
19. Plan facilities for local design and production services.
20. Use research methodology in solving educational and administrative problems.
21. Identify problem areas for study, formulate plans, and conduct research projects.
22. Prepare proposals for funding from various sources.

Function II

23. Design information systems and apply principles of information system design to Learning Resources Centers.
29. Apply technical specifications to equipment.

Function III

43. Name and explain various styles of learning which account for individual differences among students.
47. Identify and communicate research findings relevant to assessing student abilities and achievement.
48. Analyze thinking operations and explore characteristics of creativity.

Function IV

55. Apply learning theories to the design and production of materials.
57. Analyze, interpret, and apply research data to design of materials.
58. Apply design principles to the production of materials.

IV. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

This study was designed primarily to investigate how learning resources personnel in Texas assess their needs for continuing education. A questionnaire was developed on the basis of a comprehensive list of competencies published by the Texas Education Agency. Practitioners were asked to rate each competency on two scales: value to job performance and level of expertise.

The questionnaire was administered to a random sample of practitioners in the field, with a return rate of 72 percent. Statistical analysis of the data collected was accomplished through an ANOVAR program, with ancillary analysis based on ranking of the competencies by mean scores for value and expertise.

CONCLUSIONS

The data compiled in this study provide credence for seven broad conclusions. These outcomes may be regarded as a suggestive framework for planners of continuing education programs. Their main utility lies as an aid to decision-makers who are responsible for determining goals and objectives for continuing activities. Some implications for planning continuing education programs seem readily apparent in the conclusions state below.

1. This study indicates the existence of a general need, across a broad spectrum of competencies, for continuing education among Learning Resources Specialists in Texas. Practitioners rated value significantly higher than their current level of expertise for fifty-eight of the sixty competency statements. This indicates that practitioners view the importance of these activities to their job performance to be greater than their current levels of proficiency.

2. Learning Resources Specialists in Texas value all of the sixty competencies at least at the level of "some importance" to their job performance and most are valued at an even higher level. Ranking the mean scores for value yielded a range of 3.13 through 4.73; forty-six of the sixty competency statements yielded mean value scores above 3.5.

3. Learning Resources Specialists in Texas assess their general level of expertise for all of the sixty competencies to be at least at a level closely approaching "some capability." For more than half of the competency statements, they judge their proficiency to be at a level even higher than "some capabilities." Ranking the mean scores for expertise yielded a range of 2.66 through 4.38; thirty-four of the sixty competencies yielded mean expertise scores above 3.5.

4. The thirteen competencies which Learning Resources Specialists indicate have both a high value, and in which they possess a relatively low level of expertise, can be identified as first in priority for continuing education program needs. These competencies provide focus for professional development activities in the future and function as a framework for generating objectives for inservice workshops. The competencies cover a broad spectrum ranging across all four functions and

emphasize the need to enhance practitioners' ability to: design and plan facilities; plan and implement storage and retrieval systems for materials and equipment; disseminate information on resource production techniques; conduct public relations programs; use learning theories in relation to individual differences in student learning styles; develop techniques to assess and improve student learning; identify instructional capabilities of various types of media; assist students and teachers in designing, producing, and evaluating the effectiveness of media and instructional programs; and identify problem areas and conduct research to find solutions.

5. Two additional groups of competencies, isolated on a value/expertise matrix and identified for second priority in considering continuing education needs, may serve as the basis for structuring inservice activities for certain types of personnel in some school districts and under some circumstances. Planners of professional development activities might benefit by giving some attention to the nine competencies for which mean scores for value were extremely high, as well as those for which mean expertise scores were extremely low.

6. Learning Resources Specialists place greater value on more of the competencies associated with Function I (Organization and Management) and Function II (Acquisition and Dissemination) than those associated with Function III (Consultation, Instruction, Utilization) and Function IV (Learning Resources Development). A function analysis of the ranking of competencies by mean value in descending order revealed that 19 of the 20 ranked in the top third were associated with Functions I and II. This represented 55 percent of the competencies in Function I and 35 percent of the competencies in Function II, as compared to 8 percent of

the competencies in Function III and none in Function IV.

7. Learning Resources Specialists rate themselves as having a lower level of proficiency for more of the competencies associated with Function III (Consultation, Instruction, Utilization) and Function IV (Learning Resources Development) than those associated with Function I (Organization and Management) and Function II (Acquisition and Dissemination). A function analysis of the ranking of competencies in ascending order by mean expertise revealed that the top third included 50 percent of the competencies in Function III and 67 percent of the competencies in Function IV, while only 27 percent of the competencies in Function I and 20 percent of the competencies in Function II were represented.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study is viewed as an initial step in the process of determining continuing education needs for learning resources practitioners in Texas. Re-emphasis is placed on the intended use of this report as an instrument for planning.

In an attempt to answer a limited number of questions, other topics for investigation appeared during the course of the current inquiry. Further research might be based on an analysis of the descriptive data which was compiled. Effective instructional design is based on knowledge of the characteristics of the learners. Therefore, the differences among the survey respondents might be analyzed for level of employment, size of school district, and educational background to determine if these factors have any bearing on continuing education needs.

As a follow-up to this study, the competencies identified as relevant for continuing education programs might be sub-divided into more specific components to seek more precise information. A more detailed study of any of the four functions could also yield relevant data. The list of additional continuing education needs suggested by survey participants (Appendix H) might serve as a point of departure for more specific inquiries. The current researcher chose to use broader statements for this study with the belief that a more lengthy survey form would be detrimental to the rate of response.

Another research project of potential value would be to assess continuing education needs for practitioners as perceived by district-wide administrators of learning resources programs. Correlating the results of such a study with the outcome of the present research could yield valuable information.

An additional area of investigation, extending beyond the scope of this study but suggested in the process of conducting it, is an in-depth analysis of attitudes of practitioners toward some of the competency statements included in the survey. Ranking of the competencies by value implied that Learning Resources Specialists in Texas may identify with a service role that is more traditional than the modern concept outlined in the joint statement of the American Association of School Librarians, ALA and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology, Media Programs; District and School. This observation is also suggested by the statements made by practitioners as comments (Appendix I).

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APPENDICES

(APPENDIX A)

PANEL OF CONSULTANTS

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(APPENDIX B)

LEARNING RESOURCES PERSONNEL IN TEXAS:

IDENTIFYING CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS

Each competency listed has two separate scales. In the left hand column, rate each competency in terms of its importance to the effective performance of your job. In the right hand column, evaluate your level of development or expertise for each competency.

The competencies are organized according to four functions:

I. Organization and Management Functions

II. Acquisition and Dissemination Functions

III. Consultation, Instruction, Utilization Functions

IV. Learning Resources Development Functions

At the conclusion of each function, please make editorial comments and suggest additional competencies which may not be included.

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

Value to Job Performance:	Level of Expertise:
1- of no importance	1- no capability
2- of little importance	2- very little capability
3- some importance	3- some capability
4- important	4- well developed capability
5- very important	5- expert capability

I. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS

1 2 3 4 5	1. Formulate objectives, plans,and policies for the program of the Learning Resources Center.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	2. Implement objectives, plans and policies for the program of the Learning Resources Center.	1 2 3 4 5

1	2	3	4	5	3. Evaluate programs and services.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	4. Apply systems approach to implementing services.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	5. Supervise personnel and provide for staff development.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	6. Develop and apply budgetary procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	7. Establish record keeping systems and prepare reports.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	8. Develop policies and procedures for circulation and scheduling of materials.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	9. Develop policies and procedures for circulation and scheduling of equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	10. Develop policies and procedures for maintenance of materials.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	11. Develop policies and procedures for maintenance of equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	12. Implement policies and procedures for circulation of materials.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	13. Implement policies and procedures for circulation of equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	14. Evaluate and select resources which will meet informational, research, educational and recreational needs of users.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	15. Consult with teachers on evaluation and selection processes for acquiring materials.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	16. Consult with teachers on evaluation and selection processes for acquiring equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	17. Design plans for new or remodeled facilities.	1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5	18. Plan facilities and prepare specifications to provide for optimum access to materials and equipment.	1	2	3	4	5

	1	2	3	4	5	19. Plan facilities for local design and production services.	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5	20. Use research methodology in solving educational and administrative problems.	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5	21. Identify problem areas for study, formulate plans, and conduct research projects.	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5	22. Prepare proposals for funding from various sources.	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5	23. _____	1	2	3	4	5
						_____					
						_____					
	1	2	3	4	5.	24. _____	1	2	3	4	5
						_____					
						_____					
	1	2	3	4	5	25. _____	1	2	3	4	5
						_____					
						_____					

(Competency) (ID Number) _____

II. ACQUISITION AND DISSEMINATION FUNCTIONS

(23.)	1	2	3	4	5	1. Design information systems and apply principles of information system design to Learning Resources Centers.	1	2	3	4	5
(24.)	1	2	3	4	5	2. Plan, design, and implement storage and retrieval systems for materials.	1	2	3	4	5
(25.)	1	2	3	4	5	3. Plan, design, and implement storage and retrieval systems for equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
(26.)	1	2	3	4	5	4. Develop and execute policies and procedures for acquisition of materials.	1	2	3	4	5
(27.)	1	2	3	4	5	5. Develop and execute policies and procedures for acquisition of equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
(28.)	1	2	3	4	5	6. Apply evaluation criteria to materials.	1	2	3	4	5

(Competency) (ID Number)												
(29.)	1	2	3	4	5	7. Apply technical specifications to equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
(30.)	1	2	3	4	5	8. Identify sources for purchasing materials.	1	2	3	4	5
(31.)	1	2	3	4	5	9. Identify sources for purchasing equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
(32.)	1	2	3	4	5	10. Screen and disseminate information to teachers on new developments and practices.	1	2	3	4	5
(33.)	1	2	3	4	5	11. Disseminate information to students and teachers on the availability of materials and equipment in the Learning Resources Center and their effective use.	1	2	3	4	5
(34.)	1	2	3	4	5	12. Disseminate information to students and teachers on resource production techniques.	1	2	3	4	5
(35.)	1	2	3	4	5	13. Provide access to materials through organization and classification which integrates materials in all formats into a unified collection.	1	2	3	4	5
(36.)	1	2	3	4	5	14. Provide reference services and materials.	1	2	3	4	5
(37.)	1	2	3	4	5	15. Provide bibliographic services.	1	2	3	4	5
(38.)	1	2	3	4	5	16. Develop policies and procedures for preview, evaluation, and selection of materials.	1	2	3	4	5
(39.)	1	2	3	4	5	17. Develop policies and procedures for evaluation and selection of equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
(40.)	1	2	3	4	5	18. Implement policies and procedures for previewing, evaluation, and selection.	1	2	3	4	5
(41.)	1	2	3	4	5	19. Facilitate access to and delivery of materials from community, district, or regional sources.	1	2	3	4	5
(42.)	1	2	3	4	5	20. Conduct a public relations program.	1	2	3	4	5
						21. _____	1	2	3	4	5

	1	2	3	4	5	22. _____	1	2	3	4	5
						_____					
						_____					
	1	2	3	4	5	23. _____	1	2	3	4	5
						_____					
						_____					

(Competency)
(ID Number) _____

III. CONSULTATION, INSTRUCTION, UTILIZATION FUNCTIONS

(43.)	1	2	3	4	5	1. Name and explain various styles of learning which account for individual differences among students.	1	2	3	4	5
(44.)	1	2	3	4	5	2. Use information, communication, and learning theories and models in relation to learning styles and individual differences among students.	1	2	3	4	5
(45.)	1	2	3	4	5	3. Identify ways of meeting student needs and develop methods for helping students clarify values.	1	2	3	4	5
(46.)	1	2	3	4	5	4. Develop techniques for working with counselors, teachers, administrators, and parents in order to assess and improve student learning.	1	2	3	4	5
(47.)	1	2	3	4	5	5. Identify and communicate research findings relevant to assessing student abilities and achievement.	1	2	3	4	5
(48.)	1	2	3	4	5	6. Analyze thinking operations and explore characteristics of creativity.	1	2	3	4	5
(49.)	1	2	3	4	5	7. Identify capabilities of various communication media; indicate appropriate usage in the learning environment.	1	2	3	4	5
(50.)	1	2	3	4	5	8. Assist and guide teachers and students in the design and development of instructional programs including validation in relation to learner needs, teacher strategies, and learning environments.	1	2	3	4	5
(51.)	1	2	3	4	5	9. Facilitate viewing, listening, and responding skills of students and teachers.	1	2	3	4	5

(Competency) (ID Number)

(52.)	1	2	3	4	5	10. Foster independent and critical use of the Learning Resources Center by providing teachers and students with instruction in location skills, use of information/ bibliographic sources, production techniques, and use of equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
(53.)	1	2	3	4	5	11. Design and implement inservice education programs for teachers, aides, and other school related groups.	1	2	3	4	5
(54.)	1	2	3	4	5	12. Identify problem areas and conduct research to bring about solutions.	1	2	3	4	5
	1	2	3	4	5	13. _____	1	2	3	4	5
						_____					
						_____					
	1	2	3	4	5	14. _____	1	2	3	4	5
						_____					
						_____					
	1	2	3	4	5	15. _____	1	2	3	4	5
						_____					
						_____					

(Competency) (ID Number) _____

IV. LEARNING RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT FUNCTIONS

(55.)	1	2	3	4	5	1. Apply learning theories to the design and production of materials.	1	2	3	4	5
(56.)	1	2	3	4	5	2. Design and produce materials to meet student and teacher needs.	1	2	3	4	5
(57.)	1	2	3	4	5	3. Analyze, interpret, and apply research data to design of materials.	1	2	3	4	5
(58.)	1	2	3	4	5	4. Apply design principles to the production of materials.	1	2	3	4	5
(59.)	1	2	3	4	5	5. Analyze and interpret content of materials in relation to the curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
(60.)	1	2	3	4	5	6. Validate locally produced materials by applying appropriate criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of materials.	1	2	3	4	5

1 2 3 4 5 7. _____ 1 2 3 4 5

_____

_____

1 2 3 4 5 8. _____ 1 2 3 4 5

_____

_____

1 2 3 4 5 9. _____ 1 2 3 4 5

_____

_____

_____

(APPENDIX B)

DESCRIPTIVE DATA

I. What type of certification do you hold?

___ Learning Resources Specialist

___ School Librarian

___ Other (please specify) _____

II. The level of my school is (check one):

___ Elementary (Grades K-3 or K-6)

___ Middle (Grades 6-8 or 7-9)

___ Secondary (Grades 9-12 or 10-12)

III. The size of my school district is (check one):

___ Very small (under 1,500 Average Daily Attendance)

___ Small (1,500 - 4,999 Average Daily Attendance)

___ Medium (5,000 - 9,999 Average Daily Attendance)

___ Large (10,000 - 49,000 Average Daily Attendance)

___ Very Large (over 50,000 Average Daily Attendance)

IV. How many years of experience, including 1979-80 do you have as a Learning Resources Specialist?

_____ years

V. How many years of experience, including 1979-80 do you have as a classroom teacher?

_____ years

VI. What degrees do you hold? Please specify the institutions and dates.

Degree	Institution	Date

VII. What graduate courses have you completed since your last degree?

_____

_____

_____

(APPENDIX C)

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS 77843

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM
EDUCATIONAL MEDIA CENTER

TELEPHONE 713 845-3018

April 18, 1980

Dear Colleague:

I am presently engaged in a research study to determine continuing education needs for Learning Resources Personnel in Texas. Your name has been selected as a participant from a state-wide list made available to me by the Texas Education Agency.

As you are probably aware, a new Professional Certificate and Endorsement Program for the Learning Resources Specialist was adopted in 1976, and the School Librarian Certificate ceased to be issued on August 31, 1979. Persons now certified are qualified to assume an expanded role in the school with competencies in the area of educational technology as well as library and information science. Presumably, however, most of the current practitioners in the field were trained only as librarians and lack a foundation in educational technology. This research project seeks to strengthen the capabilities of Learning Resources Personnel in Texas and enable them to function at a higher level of expertise by identifying deficient competencies and suggesting a design for the development of continuing education programs.

The findings of this study will be made available to planners of continuing education programs in school districts, education agencies, institutions of higher education, and professional organizations. Your input is vital for an accurate assessment. Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours,

E. Susan Staples

E. Susan Staples, Assistant Professor
Department of Industrial Education
Educational Technology Program

ESS:ms
Encl.

(APPENDIX D)

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS 77843

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM
EDUCATIONAL MEDIA CENTER

TELEPHONE 713 845-3018

May 8, 1980

Dear Colleague:

I recently mailed you a survey form to request your opinion regarding your own continuing education needs. Since I have not received your reply, I am writing again to solicit your response. Your participation in this study is vital to produce accurate conclusions in this research study.

The outcome of this project may provide a foundation to strengthen the capabilities of Learning Resources Personnel in Texas. The study has been endorsed by Mary R. Boyvey, Media Program Director, Texas Education Agency as an area of major concern in education. In addition, the results of the study will reported to the Texas Legislature.

Your cooperation would be very much appreciated. I recognize that this is a busy time of the year, but I urge you to find time in your schedule to give your attention to the enclosed survey form.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely yours,

E. Susan Staples

E. Susan Staples, Assistant Professor
Department of Industrial Education
Educational Technology Program

ESS:vh
Encl.

Texas Education Agency

- STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
- STATE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION
- STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

201 East Eleventh Street
Austin, Texas
78701

May 1, 1980

Dear Colleague:

Dr. Susan Staples is currently conducting a survey to determine continuing education needs for Learning Resources Personnel in Texas. This area of needs assessment is of major interest and concern to this office as well as to other agencies engaged in continuing education efforts.

I urge you to give thoughtful consideration to the completion of this survey instrument. Your informed opinion is sincerely sought as a basis for providing continuing education programs that will be of benefit and value to learning resources personnel in improving educational opportunities for students in Texas.

Sincerely,

Mary R. Boyvey

Mary R. Boyvey
Media Program Director
Instructional Resources Division

MRB/s

"An Equal Opportunity Employer"

(APPENDIX F)

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS 77843

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM
EDUCATIONAL MEDIA CENTER

TELEPHONE 713 845-3018

May 2, 1980

Dear Learning Resources Program Director:

I am a former school librarian/media specialist. As a faculty member at Texas A&M, I am presently engaged in a research study to determine continuing education needs for Learning Resources Personnel in Texas. Persons in your district may have been selected as participants from a state-wide list made available to me by the Texas Education Agency.

As you are aware, a new Professional Certificate and Endorsement Program for the Learning Resources Specialist was adopted in 1976, and the School Librarian Certificate ceased to be issued on August 31, 1979. Persons now certified are qualified to assume an expanded role in the school with competencies in the area of educational technology as well as library and information science. Presumably, however, most of the current practitioners in the field were trained only as librarians and lack a foundation in educational technology. This research project seeks to strengthen the capabilities of Learning Resources Personnel in Texas and enable them to function at a higher level of expertise by identifying deficient competencies and suggesting a design for the development of continuing education programs. A copy of the survey form used to collect data is enclosed.

The findings of this study will be disseminated to school districts, professional organizations, and institutions of higher education as a framework for planning continuing education programs. A report of the study will also be submitted to the Texas Legislature.

The project has been endorsed by Kathryn Thompson, President of the Learning Resources Program Directors of Texas and Mary Boyvey, Program Director for the Texas Education Agency. I am also requesting your support. If you would encourage the persons from your district (whose names are listed on an enclosed page) to complete the survey form and return it to me, I would be grateful for your assistance.

Sincerely yours,

E. Susan Staples

E. Susan Staples, Assistant Professor
Department of Industrial Education
Educational Technology Program

ESS:fa
Encl.

60

(APPENDIX F)

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS 77843

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM
EDUCATIONAL MEDIA CENTER

TELEPHONE 713 845-3018

May 2, 1980

TO: LEARNING RESOURCES PROGRAM DIRECTORS OF TEXAS

FROM: E. SUSAN STAPLES, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

RE: RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS: Identifying Continuing Education Needs As Perceived By Learning Resources Personnel in the Public Schools of Texas

District:

Selected Participants:

(APPENDIX G)

SPRING BRANCH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
HENRY WHEELER, General Superintendent
PHONE 464-1511
955 CAMPBELL ROAD

OFFICE OF
MRS. KATHRYN THOMPSON
DIRECTOR OF LEARNING MEDIA SERVICES

MAILING ADDRESS
P. O. BOX 19432
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77024

April 28, 1980

Dear Learning Resources Program Director:

This letter will serve to make you aware of a research study that is presently being conducted at Texas A & M University by Dr. E. Susan Staples. This study is designed to determine needs for continuing education programs that would be of value for learning resources personnel in Texas. The findings will be useful to planners of continuing education programs in school districts, professional organizations, the Education Agency, and institutions of higher education.

A copy of the survey instrument which has already been mailed to selected personnel in your district is enclosed, and the names of the persons who have received this form are indicated at the bottom of this letter.

I urge you to give your support to this project by encouraging each person listed below to complete the research instrument and return it to Texas A & M University as soon as possible.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Kathryn Thompson

Kathryn Thompson, President
The Learning Resources Program
Directors of Texas

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(APPENDIX H)

ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES SUGGESTED BY RESPONDENTS

Developing a human resources file of community members for use by teachers and students.

Identifying and acquiring professional curriculum-related materials for on-site needs of teachers.

Securing rapid return of materials checked out.

Securing a "Complete Quiet" atmosphere within the library when used by class groups.

Developing a wider use of library materials for bi-lingual students.

Teaching library reference skills to bi-lingual students.

Designing curriculum to make the library resources center the "Center" of the curriculum.

Integrating the use of textbooks with the resources of the LRC.

Developing greater interest in the classics.

Developing a greater interest in current national and international events and problems.

Eliminating verbatim copying from materials by students.

Planning and providing space and time for students to display learning materials.

Securing larger budgets for library materials.

Conducting fund-raising activities.

Establishing a record collection.

Setting up a filmstrip and film collection, including selection, cataloging, and storage of materials.

Maintaining and doing minor repairs on audio visual equipment.

Networking.

Storytelling for all all ages.

Using and maintaining the newer equipment such as computers and VTR's.

ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES (continued)

Helping students and teachers design and use applicable computer programs for optimum use of the school computer.

Communicating the services of the LRC to faculty and students.

Communicating goals and needs to administrators and the community.

Understanding district politics; knowing who, when, and where to contact district personnel for assistance.

Securing the cooperation and interest of principals.

Realizing the function of the LRC as part of a larger program.

Planning a well-rounded program.

Policy making.

Setting priorities realistically and formulating and implementing long and short term goals.

Scheduling time and priorities effectively. (Since LRC's now house all teaching materials, it is more important than ever that time be used efficiently or the LRC director will not have time for the child related tasks, i.e. stories, personal book selection, reading encouragement, etc.)

Providing scheduling that is flexible and still meets the needs of the entire school.

Organizing to provide individual assistance for individual needs.

Developing more effective human relations skills.

Handling volunteers, employed aides, and student assistants.

Planning and working with individual teachers to meet the needs of all students involved.

Adapting to changes brought about by colleagues who do not plan well.

Having patience to deal with so many types of people and personalities: children, teachers, parents, administrators, and also the custodial staff.

Recruiting volunteers and training them to work with the RIF Program.

Getting parents involved in the LRC.

Working with adults at night through continuing education.

ADDITIONAL COMPETENCIES (continued)

Teaching parents how to help their children and encourage them to utilize their learning center.

Enjoying work and maintaining a good mental attitude.

(APPENDIX I)

COMMENTS

Comments Associated With Function I: ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

We need more involvement in professional organizations and continuing education programs.

I feel that I have the competency to direct, formulate and implement a sound program for a resources center.

We have a central processing system. Our coordinator handles most administrative duties and all future planning.

Audio visual equipment is housed adjacent to library. The person in charge takes care of equipment and supplies teachers with equipment needed.

Funding from various sources is done by the Audio Visual Coordinator for the School District.

Our district office makes the decisions as to funding for libraries.

We have a fixed budget each year based on enrollment. The budget is approved by the school board.

So many of these competencies just don't apply to me as a middle school librarian.

Being in an elementary school library, some of these don't apply.

My libraries (because I am 1/2 time in two) bear little resemblance to a Learning Resources Center. They are both more "library" but are open (not rigidly scheduled).

COMMENTS - Function I (continued)

More time needed for students and less for paperwork.

My biggest problem is getting my teachers to view me as a resource person and not just someone to "baby sit" their students for their thirty minutes off. Also, I have 800 students in class weekly. I have no aide or other professional help with my many responsibilities.

Learning Resources Specialists should be given more authority in design of the center and should be allowed to meet with the architect.

Most school librarians rarely, if ever, have input regarding design of facilities.

No new facilities are being planned. No experience in this area.

There is seldom time for research.

While I certainly recognize the importance of professional research and planning, we often seem to be too busy "doing" to have adequate time for careful attention to sound educational theory. Many of our methods probably need review and revision; but such reflection necessitates professional time for other than meeting public service demands. I have little of this time.

The functions of the librarian in this area [Function I] will depend on the organizational plan of the individual school district. For instance, in this district, a librarian has no input on the budget or funding. She is told how much is authorized in which category. It also depends on the principal of each building as to the librarian's function in regard to production of materials and as to time allowed for staff development and indeed on all policies of the library. As for solving educational and administrative problems, I have never heard of a librarian being asked or permitted to assume that duty. We do have curriculum committee (Program Development Council), consultants, and other educational experts.

Comments Associated With Function II: ACQUISTION AND DISSEMINATION

Selection of audio-visual equipment is handled largely by our Title IV people, so I don't get much input. I am learning which equipment is durable and will have more of a voice in this area each year.

In my district, the administrative leaders develop the policies and procedures for evaluation of equipment. The LRC's implement them.

One of the most important aids to students and teachers is a Resources Center or School Library.

With the availability and access to materials and equipment furnished by the resources centers we have more successful students and teachers.

Computer access is available only system-wide, though we have the benefits of centralized computerized ordering, and we know how to read the printouts of books ordered, received, and funds expended.

We do plan for storage and retrieval; however, [we do] no design.

I have spent a great deal of time setting up policies and implementing them. This is a very important task.

Skill in items 6-9 [Apply evaluation criteria to materials; Apply technical specifications to equipment; Identify sources for purchasing materials; Identify sources for purchasing equipment] are especially important with small budgets in order to obtain the highest quality and quantity.

Time to do all of the above is not sufficient.

Very few of these competencies even apply to me.

Comments - Function II (continued)

Everyone conducts one constantly [public relations program] whether they realize it or not.

Comments Associated With Function III:
CONSULTATION, INSTRUCTION, UTILIZATION

I could hold an inservice for our faculty. Have done this for a group of parents.

Individualized instruction is given to students and teachers where the need arises.

This is easier to do because my first certification was for Secondary Education. With a background of teaching experiences, I'm better able to help teachers and students.

We need to work with teachers, to instruct them in the "correct" way to use a Learning Resources Center and to also teach them that quality instruction takes time and effort on the part of the teacher as well as the learning resources coordinator. We need to teach them that the time length of a film is not the only consideration for selection. We need people who are "committed" to education before we can begin.

A librarian does not operate in a vacuum. Her primary duty is to assist. In #3 [Identify ways of meeting student needs and develop methods for helping students clarify values], for example, a counselor is the person to send for when a child needs help in clarifying values. When he gets there, the counselor will have material on hand that she and the librarian have obtained in anticipation of this situation. For #5 [Identify and communicate research findings relevant to assessing student abilities and achievement], we have consultants who do a very good job in this area. Librarians assist the consultants and work with them. I can't see where #6 [Analyze thinking operations and explore characteristics of creativity] is relevant.

Comments - Function III (continued)

I could benefit from courses on latest research in learning theory, facilitation of listening skills, etc. On the other hand, I had an undergraduate degree in Psychology and was a reference librarian until my marriage. I did special student work in Educational Psychology. So I have a good idea of where to go to do literature searches and find latest advances as needed.

There is no time for research simultaneously with on-line operation.

Some of these do not fit in with the type of system we have. Due to crowded conditions, we do not have the Learning Resources Center as such, but the audio visual department is next door and is very cooperative.

Not much here applies to my school situation. "Educational technology" has been added to "library and information science" without providing personnel or space.

Many of these areas are attended by our counselors and special education teachers.

Lack of time in the daily routine is largely responsible for my attitude toward this section of your questionnaire.

Comments Associated With Function IV: LEARNING RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

I do not have time or the talent to produce materials.

Design and production of materials should be done by a teacher aide.

This area is handled by another librarian.

Surely do think elementary librarians are better qualified for having had classroom experience first.

This whole area is handicapped by lack of funds and/or lack of building level facilities.

Numbers 1-4 [Production of teaching materials] is done in our media lab. I really dread seeing librarians spread themselves so thin to take on this responsibility.

No designing and/or production of materials is done.

The Center provides no production.

I don't design or produce materials.

Since I alone operate a library for 510 students and 38 teachers, many things I feel are important I haven't time to produce.

By this time I'm overwhelmed by the many functions suggested. The staffing of librarians would need to be greatly increased for all the desirable duties to be implemented. The production of materials should not be a primary duty of the librarian. The teacher is closer to the needs of her individual classroom. Librarians should assist.

My job involves so little creation. (I only deal with selection, acquistion, dissemination, and maintenance of materials and equipment; not their production.)

Coordinators need to learn simple, inexpensive materials and techniques to use with teachers and students.

We have professionally designed media. I would rather spend my time on a one-to-one or group basis with students, helping and teaching them. I believe that people make the difference, not the software, but individuals.

Comments - Function IV (continued)

Numbers 5 and 6 [Analyze and interpret content of materials in relation to the curriculum; Validate locally produced materials by applying appropriate criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of materials] are in our province because they pertain to selection.

I do not feel it is the job of a librarian to create materials. It is the job of a librarian to make the creations of others accessible.

GENERAL COMMENTS

So many of these questions did not apply to our school. We have a K-1, K-3, 2-3, 4-5, 6-8 Middle School, and 9-12 High School. We have TEA Certified Librarians in each school and two in High School. We have a Media Center where the equipment is repaired and slides etc. are produced. In my school each teacher has her own equipment and what she shares with others is handled through the principal's office. He also orders all the equipment. Our budget is based on our enrollment; about $5 per child. Some schools have better Resources Centers than the others. I do not know how the high school operates.

Many items on this survey might be of more importance except for the fact that there is simply not enough time to consider them. Since even in the best circumstances there is one librarian per building, priorities must be set and many "nice" benefits eliminated. In rating these competencies as to their value, it was hard for me not to consider this factor.

There is neither enough time in the day nor personnel available to achieve, in any satisfactory manner, activities and goals outlined here. I sincerely hope that this research doesn't expect to find someone in Texas public schools who can score "5" on all entries.

Universities hinder librarians who only wish to update skills by requiring them to go through all the paperwork hassle to be admitted to the university, graduate program etc. before being allowed to take a refresher course for which the applicant did not desire college credit or further degree plans. Case in point, eight years after completing a M.L.S., upon inquiring what was necessary to take one course to update my skills, I was told I would have to fill out lengthy application forms to be admitted to graduate school (this from the same university which granted me the Master's degree) and the application form included

recommendations from college professors, who to my knowledge were retired or had moved from the state. These same professors would not have remembered me eight years later anyway. Needless to say, I scrapped the idea of going back for a course. What is the answer? More non-graduate credit oriented seminars and mini-courses aimed at updating terminology, concepts, and emphasis in the specific field of the teacher/librarian. Seminars should be patterned after those in the business world where a fee is charged, materials provided, and information presented in a concentrated format. Those who attend should not be expected to provide a transcript from every university they ever attended, GRE scores, recommendations from former professors, employers, and on and on.

I firmly believe that my background, education, and experience contribute to the whole aspect of my library work. I have a strong liberal arts background. (Art, Music, Dance, Language, Latin, French and Spanish) with a major in English and a double minor in History and Philosophy. I've taught High School English, 4th grade Elementary School, plus adult Basic Education. Then I worked on my M.L.S. That degree prepared me for any kind of library, but courses were heavy in cataloging and reference. I've needed more courses in production of audio visual materials, mending preparation of library skills lessons that would relate to the curriculum, and experience in making book talks, molding puppets, etc. I've needed a super management course on how to keep up with all clerical work while having classes and individuals in the library all day every day (how to keep all those things going on the school media center without an aide or student help). For all that we do, we are terribly underpaid. We fulfill an administrative job and are still on a teacher's salary. I write and carry out all school units of study, coordinate lots and lots of activities and programs, come early, stay late. I keep up with all the circulation and other clerical housekeeping without any help and help all the faculty members, parents and students with the things they need. Being a school librarian is an essential and important job to the educational environment. We've come a long way, from mousey little old ladies with shawls and crepe soled shoes! With all that is expected of us and with the new requirements (which I think are terrific), we need to be paid better. The teacher's salary does not cover what we are doing. We should be on a different scale. We are teacher plus a lot more!

There is a full time job of teaching library skills/reading enrichment etc., besides a full time clerical job, and school librarians are responsible for both jobs. We're expected to keep the library open and everything neat and do everything for everybody! And when enrollment drops, we're split between schools: we're not even counted with faculty in some statistics, but counted as extra. At the end and beginning of school we're expected to keep books, etc. in circulation as long as kids are in the building, but we aren't paid to work anymore than teachers. We're not paid to come early but we're asked to check out materials and books before children come to school. The clincher is the inventory, and accurate records have to be second and sometimes lost. Help!

Please forgive what may seem a puzzling inconsistency in my "left hand" (value) responses, but I find myself answering some questions in terms of competencies that ought to be important, according to good theory and ideal practice; other answers reflect actual practice here. In other words, those functions most necessary to meet daily needs and demands of our staff and student clientele may get top billing, and those that are less subject to immediate, public service expectations somehow get pushed into the background. This doesn't always reflect my view of what should be included in my services to the public or the profession but represents a kind of "squeaky hinge" operation. Time constraints often mean that by the time the squeaky hinges are all oiled, there just isn't any time, or energy, or imagination, or enthusiasm left to do all the other "oughts," no matter how important I personally think they are.

Any continuing education program should be developed to be part of each school district's inservice programs held during school year. Also, librarians should be allowed to attend any continuing education programs (non inservice) on school time with professional leave. If any fees are charged, they should be reimbursed for them or paid for attending.

Currently, in my district, most elementary school librarians do not have clerks. (Some are available on a part-time basis in Title I schools.) Many schools are without volunteers, or only a few, and a great deal of the assistance must be handled by students.

I believe in the pragmatic approach in library science/education.

I am working in a junior high library where there are almost 500 students. All of the students spend one hour a week in the library. I do not have any assistants (professional).

We have an orientation period for several weeks but this is not sufficient. I do work with teachers on many phases of class learning. I also work with the one responsible for the audio visual equipment, even to the ordering of equipment.

I am a junior high librarian who is also in charge of audio visual materials and most of the equipment. I purchase all the library materials (books, magazines, etc.), and audio visual materials, but not the audio visual equipment. I serve approximately 600 students and have no help except for student help.

Although I can see possible future importance of some functions to effective performance of my job, I am presently involved in basic organization of a new elementary school library and a junior high, high school library that has not had the services of a librarian for over twelve years. Some services which I hope eventually to provide I have given a lower rating because at present these functions are not my responsibility, or have not been part of the library program here.

There should be some basic standards for setting up library usage, so that teacher's off-periods do not come when their class is assigned to the library.

I had a 3-hour inservice summer course in 1975 on use of audio visual equipment and development of materials using this equipment. I am sure I could benefit from further study but feel adequately prepared to handle consulting, reference, and technical aspects of media work. I have only eight years left before retirement, continue to take course work for pleasure, but will probably pursue no further professional study. Meantime, I continue to read professional journals and attend meetings to keep up with recent research.

From the competencies you have listed, I can see you are well aware of the situation of present day LRC's. I think you hit just about every area. It's nice to not be alone.

GENERAL COMMENTS (continued)

I have taken time out of my daily schedule to complete this form. I do hope that it is helpful to you. I think it is commendable that you are interested in improving the capabilities of Learning Resources Personnel; however, I do not think that there is any real lack in the education of the Learning Resources Specialist in Texas in most areas of competency listed in your survey. One extremely important exception is that there is very little opportunity to apply theories practically until one actually has a job, at which time I am afraid, most of us find that the hypothetical situations presented to us in our course work were idealistic, with very little similiarity to real world situations. Had I not had several years of experience in education, I would have been in shock when I took this job as high school librarian and coordinator of 6 elementary and 3 middle schools.

This is how it is, not how it should be. Actually this form doesn't fit my job, so I had trouble with some of the ability ratings. The left hand column ratings reflect the building level state of the art, the right hand my own capabilities, which need improving and refurbishing. Some of my initial training has withered from lack of a chance to use it, some is just plain lack of time.

After initial planning and screening, I let teachers of subject areas decide greatly which materials will be acquired. I have very little training/experience in creating my own audio-visual material; an accomplished teachers' aide does that. I need more technical knowledge of equipment to do a better job in acquiring it. Although it is a very important task, I am just now beginning to be successful in informing teachers and students of materials and equipment available (especially new faculty members).

Once I have acquired materials (printed materials especially, and periodicals most of all), I have trouble knowing how long to hang on to them, how to keep them, or even if they should be kept.

After 17 years of "retirement", I returned (Sept. '78) to the high school library which I left in 1961. At that time there were under 4,000 volumes in the library collection. I was replaced by a non-certified caretaker. The Title I program (1966) required the school to have a professional, so I was pressed into service for a semester to ramrod selection of materials and to oversee three library aides.

GENERAL COMMENTS (continued)

The following September another certified librarian took charge. As library supervisor, I am based at the high school library with one aide in a junior high and one in a large elementary school. The library collections have grown tremendously. It is only because my aides have been where they are since 1966 that I am able to be effective at all. My professional skills are well-recovered, but the days are too short. This forces me to be fairly hard-boiled about areas of prime importance. In another school district I might have different responses.

Some of the items on which I have circled 1, 2, or 3 under the expertise section were included in library science classes I took for certification. However, since I have had little or no need for utilizing these skills in my present job, I do not feel I possess the knowledge or competence which comes from experience in these areas.

These responses are relative to my particular job in a small (under 500 students) Learning Resources Center. In my district many evaluative and administrative responsibilities are directly handled by the district library supervisor and do not fall under my purview. Also, the manner in which budgetary function is set up in the district affects my answer to some of the ratings. If I were answering this questionnaire according to the "ideal" LRC supervisor, some answers would be different.

The changes that are being made in our profession are most encouraging, but I fear that we may feel, at times, that having changed titles, we will have changed the nature of those who bear the titles. 'Tain't necessarily so. I know of institutions that boast their "IMC's" or "Resources Centers" or other promising departments that continue to look and act suspiciously like "libraries" of old. I am perfectly happy to be a librarian, working in a good, service-oriented library. The term is not the problem; our limited vision as to what a library/librarian can and should be/do is what worries me. If limited vision remains, the label doesn't make much difference, and I hear and hear-of individuals now completing certification who continue to pledge that they will have nothing to do with "all that other stuff," meaning anything other than books, magazines, and other traditional print library fare.

This brings me to a final point, and that is the need for state standards regarding minimum personnel for libraries which are projected with a realistic view of what it takes to make a real resources center. Local administrators often seem ready, willing, and able enough to purchase machinery, ranging from simple to sophistocated; yet, these same decision-makers will grudgingly staff a library which is to house, circulate, and care for such equipment, with one harried professional, and then they

argue that this individual might just as easily be an aide, working half a day in the library and the other half elsewhere in the building. Some of the critics who charge, as one of our school board members did recently in the press, that there is far too much audio visual equipment in the district, mostly sitting on shelves unused, would probably be the last to suggest the addition of personnel qualified to assist teachers and students in the constructive use of said equipment. In our high school, which requires the services of five principals, each with a secretary, and five (or so) counselors, there are two librarians and two clerks. Somehow, it does not compute, not if we are to pay more than lip service to a program of library services that covers the entire range of resources currently available to us. Ultimately, the size and shape and nature of a library depends on those who staff it, regardless of what they are called. But until pushed by the state to develop good library (IMC, Resources Center, etc.) programs, not only at the building level, but through a district systems approach, then we will change too little and too late. This is not a prediction of gloom and doom. The schools will stand, and students will continue to grow and to learn, with or without good library service. But it is really disappointing to think of all they will be missing, or all they could be experiencing, if they had access to a Resources Center and a Resources Specialist worthy of the names. Through efforts such as yours, this access may be possible for more and more Texas students and teachers in the coming years. It is an exciting possibility!